Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A VARIETY OF THE OX-EYE DAISY.—I am not a little interested in the note in the NATURALIST for September, by Professor Tenney, in relation to the form of the Ox-eye Daisy, which he suspects to be new. Although this form may be new to science, in that it has not been hitherto described, yet this is certainly not the first time it has been detected. Within a period of fifteen years past, I have found it some three or four times, I think; and I never suspected it to be anything but a chance variety of *Leucanthemum vulgare.* In the summer of 1865, it was brought to me from a spot close by my house, agreeing in all respects with the description by Professor T.; and wishing to try the effect of cultivation upon it, I transplanted a good root to my garden, but it was afterward destroyed by accident, before the result could become known. I cannot believe it to be specifically distinct from the common *Leucanthemum*, or anything more or less than a variation, through accidental causes, from the normal state of the species. To my mind it stands in the same line with the petaloid form of *Penthorum*, or the "*Peloria*" condition of *Linaria vulgaris;* and many other genera might be cited as furnishing instances of like departures now and then from the ordinary and natural style.—C. M. TRACY.

◆

ZOÖLOGY.

THE BREEDING HABITS OF BIRDS.—In reading the lately published work of Mr. Samuels, on the Ornithology and Oölogy of New England, I noticed some statements regarding the breeding habits of some of our birds, which are at variance with my own observations.

Of the Belted Kingfisher he says: "The birds on arriving commence pairing, and they soon begin excavating in a sand-bank a long, winding hole, of about three inches and a half in diameter at the entrance, and gradually larger to the end, at which the nest, composed of grasses, leaves, and feathers, is built,—or laid, which would, perhaps, be the better term. This hole is sometimes as much as six or eight feet, usually from four to six, in length." Page 126.

My experience in regard to the breeding habits of the Kingfisher is entirely at variance with the above. Of two burrows found last spring, one measured thirty-four, and the other thirty-five inches in length; they were excavated in the form of an elbow. The passage leading from the entrance in one of them was sixteen inches in length; and then turning to the right, lead to a cavity of about ten inches in diameter, the bottom of which was three-fourths of an inch below the bottom of the way leading to it, and four and a half inches in height, being in the form of an oven; including the cavity, the length of this part of the burrow was eighteen inches. The eggs were placed in the hollow *on the bare earth.* I have seen many of their burrows, and have yet to find one in which a nest is made of any material.

Again he says: "The Mottled Owl selects for a nesting-place a hollow tree, often in the orchard, and commences laying at about the first of May, in the latitude of the middle of Massachusetts. The nest is made at the bottom of the hollow, and is constructed of grass, leaves, moss, and sometimes a few feathers. It is not elaborately made, being nothing more than a heap of soft materials." Page 67.

This is another instance in which the bird makes no nest, or at least I have never found one. All rapacious birds are awkward workmen at nest-building, especially the Owls. Those Owls which occupy a nest at all, usually select the abandoned nest of the Crow or Hawk; sometimes they select one in a most dilapidated state, in which case they repair it with dried sticks, sometimes green ones with the leaves adhering, which they break from the neighboring trees; and with bark collected from dead limbs, etc.; very seldom do they construct a new nest.

The difficulty with which Owls and Hawks obtain the material for building their nests, compels them to use the same nest year after year; the upper mandible so overhangs the lower one, that it is difficult for them to pick up a stick from the ground, and they often use their claws to carry the material.

Had not Mr. Samuels been an eye-witness of the weaving capacity of the Marsh Hawk [page 48], I should doubt the power they possess in so combining the materials of their nest as to cause them to appear to be woven. In many instances they merely trample down the grass in the meadow, and lay their eggs on the bare turf; and when they pretend to build a nest it will not compare in architecture with that of the common hen.

I make these statements, because I believe facts concerning the habits should be given as well as the minutiæ of classification, as in this way information will be the better imparted to those seeking knowledge; and we shall then have the natural history as well as the nomenclature of birds.—AUGUSTUS FOWLER, *Danvers, Mass.*

CHANGE OF COLOR IN FISH.—A medium-sized "horned-pout," in a dining saloon in this city, changed color in a few days from black to a very bright clear color. The fish has remained in running water some weeks in a set marble bowl, where soft water runs all the time. This fact may help to confirm Mr. Bolles' observation mentioned in the NATURALIST, p. 391.—W. B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Worcester.*